5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

covered with juniper twigs and long grass. The skin of a wolf, coyote, or fox, is stuffed with grass, and made to look as natural as possible. A hole is cut in the wolf skin and a rope is passed through it, one end being tied to a large piece of meat which lies by the skin, and the other passing through the roof down into the pit. The bait is now covered with grass, and the man returns to his lodge for the night. 223

During the night, he sings his eagle songs and burns sweet grass for the eagles, rubbing the smoke over his own body to purify himself, so that on the morrow he will give out no scent. Before day he leaves his lodge without eating or drinking, goes to the pit and lies down in it. He uncovers the bait, arranges the roof, and sits there all day holding the rope. Crows and other birds alight by the bait and peck at it, but he pays no attention to them. [782] [533] [783]

The eagle, sailing about high in air, sees the bait, and settles down slowly. It takes it a long time to make up its mind to come to the bait. In the pit, the man can hear the sound of the eagle coming. When the bird settles on the ground, it does not alight on the bait, but at one side of it, striking the ground with a thud—heavily. The man never mistakes anything else for that sound. The eagle walks toward the bait, and all the other birds fly away. It walks on to the roof; and, through the crevices that have been left between the sticks, the man can see in which direction the bird's head is. He carefully pushes the stick aside and, reaching out, grasps the eagle by the two feet. The bird does not struggle much. It is drawn down into the pit, and the man wrings its neck. Then the opening is closed, and the roof arranged as before. So the man waits and catches the eagles that come through the day. Sometimes he sits all day and gets nothing; again he may get eight or ten in a day.

When darkness comes, the man leaves his hiding-place, [782]

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Crows who had taken a large band of horses from the Piegans the day before. The ceremony was a very impressive one, and prayers were offered not only for the success of this war party, but also for the general good, as well as for the welfare of special individuals, who were mentioned by name. The concluding words of the general prayer were as follows: "May all people have full life. Give to all heavy bodies. Let the young people grow; increase their flesh. Let all men, women, and children have full life. Harden the bodies of the old people so that they may reach great age."

In 1879, Mr. Schultz saw a sacred pipe unwrapped for the benefit of a sick woman, and on various occasions since he has been present at this ceremony. All accounts of what takes place agree so closely with what I saw that I give only one of them. Mr. Schultz wrote me of the first occasion: "When I entered the lodge, it was already well filled with men who had been invited to participate in the ceremony. The medicine man was aged and gray-headed, and his feeble limbs could scarcely support his body. Between him and his wife was the bundle which contained the medicine pipe, as yet unwrapped, lying on a carefully folded buffalo robe. Plates of food were placed before each guest, and after all had finished eating, and a common pipe had been lighted to be smoked around the circle, the ceremony began.

"With wooden tongs, the woman took a large coal from the fire, and laid it on the ground in front of the sacred stem. Then, while every one joined in singing a chant, a song of the buffalo (without words), she took a bunch of dried sweet grass, and, raising and lowering her hand in time to the music, finally placed the grass on the burning coals. As the thin column of perfumed smoke rose from the burning herb, both she and the medicine man grasped handfuls of it and rubbed it over their persons, to purify themselves before touching the sacred roll. They also took each a small piece of some

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

root from a little pouch, and ate it, signifying that they purified themselves without and within.

"The man and woman now faced each other and again began the buffalo song, keeping time by touching with the clenched hands — the right and left alternately — the wrappings of the pipe, occasionally making the sign for buffalo. Now, too, one could occasionally hear the word *Nai-ai*'[1] in the song. After singing this song for about ten minutes, it was changed to the antelope song, and, instead of touching the roll with the clenched hands, which represented the heavy tread of buffalo, they closed the hands, leaving the index finger extended and the thumbs partly open, and in time to the music, as in the previous song, alternately touched the wrappers with the tips of the left and right forefinger, the motions being quick and firm, and occasionally brought the hands to the side of the head, making the sign for antelope, and at the same time uttering a loud '*Kuh*,' to represent the whistling or snorting of that animal.

"At the conclusion of this song, the woman put another bunch of sweet grass on a coal, and carefully undid the wrappings of the pipe, holding each one over the smoke to keep it pure. When the last wrapping was removed, the man gently grasped the stem and, every one beginning the pipe song, he raised and lowered it several times, shaking it as he did so, until every feather and bit of fur and scalp hung loose and could be plainly seen.

"At this moment the sick woman entered the lodge, and with great difficulty, for she was very weak, walked over to the medicine woman and knelt down before her. The medicine woman then produced a small bag of red paint, and painted a broad band across the sick woman's forehead, a stripe down the nose, and a number of round dots on each cheek. Then picking up the pipe stem, which the man had laid down, she held it up toward the sky and prayed, saying,

[1] My shelter; my covering; my robe.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

and offered him a pipe and the promise of horses and other valuables in exchange for his power. Should the owner not wish to part with his sacred possession, or should he feel the offer too small, he refused the pipe. If he accepted the pipe, he agreed to the transfer.

Although the details of transfer rituals differed with particular medicine bundles, the ceremonies associated with the transfer of the more important bundles had a number of general features in common. Before the formal transfer, the petitioner and bundle owner purified themselves by taking a sweat bath together. The two men, both naked, entered a sweat lodge, which was a temporary structure composed of a framework of arched willows covered with buffalo robes. Attendants heated stones in a near-by fire and placed them inside the sweat lodge. The two bathers sprinkled water on the hot stones, producing a steam which caused them to perspire freely in the little enclosure. Meanwhile, they sang and prayed. At the conclusion of this purification rite they ran to the cool waters of a near-by lake or stream.

The bundle transfer took place inside the owner's tipi. His wife assisted him in the ritual of transfer. Usually a smudge of sweet-smelling grass or other fragrant plant was made on an earth altar in front of the owner's seat. He opened the ceremony by narrating in detail the story of the origin of the bundle. Then, very slowly and deliberately, often making three feints toward an object before touching it, he proceeded to open the sacred bundle. He untied the knots in the rawhide cords surrounding the bundle, unwrapped the outer covering of skin and the inner ones of trade cloth, and reverently picked up each of the sacred articles in the bundle. He accompanied his actions with prayers and songs, singing a different song for each article handled. Smoking a pipe, dancing, and painting the face of the bundle purchaser were also parts of the ritual of transfer of the more important bundles. Many hours were required to transfer a complex bundle.

The purchaser watched and listened intently, for he had to learn every detail of the bundle ritual. He also had to learn

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

796 237 woman began to collect buffalo bull tongues to be used in the ceremony. When a sufficient number of tongues were supplied—several parfleches full—the camp announcer called upon all those who had served as medicine women in previous years and the women who had vowed to "come forward to the tongues" to come with their husbands to the lodge of the medicine woman, which was pitched a little inside the great camp circle. There a medicine woman of a previous year who was to instruct the neophyte in the role she was assuming lifted one of the tongues and called upon the sun, professing her steadfast loyalty to her husband. Each woman in the assembly then made a similar confession. Then the sacred tongues were cut up, boiled, and placed in parfleches in the medicine woman's lodge.

796 [801] 796 484 [785] [783] Movements in Blackfoot rituals commonly were repeated four times. In the sun dance the entire camp moved four times on as many successive days. On the morning of the first day the medicine woman began to fast. Each day the camp moved she led the way, riding a horse with travois attached, on which were placed the sun dance bundle and the parfleches filled with sacred tongues. On each of the four days her husband and the male instructor wise in the ritual of the sun dance purified themselves in a sweat lodge made from one hundred willows, which were cut, brought in on horseback, and made into a lodge by members of one of the men's societies. Finally, on the fourth day, the people of the tribe arrived at the site selected for the erection of the great medicine lodge.

796 346 The major action and the climax of the sun dance occurred on the fifth day. It was on that day that the medicine lodge was built. Its most sacred architectural feature was the center pole, a tall tree trunk of cottonwood, forked near the top. A man famed as a scout for war parties was sent to select the center pole. When he found a suitable tree he returned to camp and reported his discovery. Then he led a party of seasoned warriors to the tree. A man who had killed an enemy chopped the tree down and, as it began to fall, shot at the trunk with his gun. As soon as the tree hit the ground all the warriors charged it. Each broke off

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

long poles connected by rawhide lines converged upon the medicine lodge from the four cardinal directions. They sang as they advanced. Then, using their poles as props, they carefully raised the center pole into position so that it stood upright in the hole dug to receive it. The medicine women stood by, praying that this pole raising might be accomplished successfully. Should the pole fail to stand upright, people would surely accuse her of being less virtuous than she proclaimed to be.

Raising the center pole provided the dramatic climax to the medicine woman's role in the sun dance. Once this pole was firmly planted, her assistants led her to her lodge, where she broke her fast on berry soup. Her husband took a final sweat bath to purify himself. Meanwhile, the other men of the great encampment completed the medicine lodge as quickly as possible by binding the rafters with the prepared hide thongs and covering the sides of the lodge with green cottonwood boughs.

Early the next morning a booth of cottonwood boughs was erected on the west side of the medicine lodge. This booth was occupied by two or more men who periodically left it to dance to the accompaniment of several old men who sang and beat upon a buffalo rawhide with rattles. Wearing only breechclouts and moccasins, the dancers faced the sun and blew upon eagle-bone whistles. Their dance consisted primarily of raising and lowering themselves on their toes in time to the music. These dancers were spoken of as "weather dancers" because they were responsible for preventing rain and insuring sunny weather through the remaining days of the ceremony. They usually performed for four days, during which they refrained from eating. At intervals during this period persons approached the weather dancers to be painted and prayed for.

On the first of the four days a fire pit was dug between the center pole and the entrance to the medicine lodge on its east side. Then, one by one, victorious warriors entered the medicine lodge, hung offerings to the sun on the center pole, and recounted their war exploits. After reciting each brave deed, a warrior placed a stick on the fire. Those who could add enough sticks

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

joke with your brother's, it means you are in earnest." The only Blood confined to the insane asylum, whose case was not complicated by physical causes, attempted to murder his wife because he believed she was having intercourse with a ghost. Many a husband, approaching his end, threatens his mate with death, for only when she accompanies him on his final journey can he be sure that in the next world he alone will possess her.

Husbands, who need proof of good behavior and who can afford to pay for it, may insist that their wives "vow the tongues"[149] or put up the Sun Lodge, for only those who are chaste before and faithful after marriage can do so with impunity. Sometimes, however, the pressure may be so great, that a woman must take a chance. Urged by her husband who remained unconvinced concerning her virginity at marriage, Weasel Girl distributed the tongues at the Sun Dance. Her husband's uncle, noting that she failed to mention the names of any men she had rebuffed, suspected her avowal, and threw his piece of meat to a dog at his side. Later that evening, this dog was shot while making off with a chicken. His alertness and caution had saved him, the uncle was certain, from a sure and untimely death. That Weasel Girl, herself, only lived three years longer was further evidence that she had lied.

Suspicion is not always without cause, as it may well have been in this instance. The most casual encounter, the social dances in the dance hall, even the Sun Dance, offer innumerable opportunities for illicit adventures, and these are not missed. Many a husband has found his wife with her lover. But so obsessed are they by their suspicions, that every possibility of adultery immediately becomes a fact.

Informal wife-lending among the Blood is inconceivable whether to a casual friend[150] or a life-long "*taka*." Yet this act which cannot be tolerated in daily living, is ritually sanctioned when the sorcery roots are purchased by members in the Horn Society.[151] At this time, the wife of the buyer deposits her clothes in her husband's lap. Protected by a buffalo robe, she is taken to the tipi of the seller and ceremonially painted. She then "goes

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[149] Wissler, *Blackfoot Sun Dance*, p. 234 ff.

[150] Henry in his Journal (vol. 2, p. 526) states that the Blackfoot were a "nuisance in offering women." Wissler (*Social Life*, p. 10) observes that he believes these women were captives.

[151] Among the neighboring Cree the opposite situation existed. They practised informal wife exchange. D. G. Mandelbaum (*The Plains Cree*, p. 246) writes: "This relationship reflected considerable honor upon the participants, for only the most stout-hearted men could become intimate companions of their wives' paramours." But in a ceremony called Sitting Up Until Morning (*ibid.*, p. 228) although the "warriors of one society issued invitations to the wives or daughters of the members of other societies" and "at dawn, the men washed and painted the women's faces,

Part 1

CEREMONIAL AND RELIGIOUS USES OF PLANTS

Overview

824
237 The role of plants in the religious and ceremonial life of the Blackfoot was* no less important than that of animals: both were essential for a correct re-enactment of the sacred event. The function of animal artifacts appears to have been documentation in general; the function of certain plant species was preparatory in nature.

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824 By "preparatory" is meant the ritualistic use of plants to help place a person (or a group, such as a tribal society) in a condition to receive power from the sacred realm. The objects contained in the bundles and the charms of personal use attested to the original sacred event by which such power was conferred, and they were the symbolic means through which the
[302]
[554] revelation was demonstrated. The real power of the ceremony, commonly but mistakenly thought to reside in the songs, really lay in the face-painting, and the owner of the design reserved the right of initial benefit and source. He was the human proprietor of the sacred gift.

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824 The preparatory role of the plants was essentially that of purification. Blackfoot mythology and ceremonial procedure show that the prerequisite of favors from the supernatural realm was the symbolic shedding of daily life. This cleansing---so suggestive of the initial stages of a rite of passage---usually was brought about in either or both of two ways: the subject could
[782] pass through an ordeal in a small enclosure, the sweat lodge. It is important to note that incensing was prescribed primarily for the handling

[128] *We use the past tense with few exceptions, throughout, because Blackfoot ceremonials belong, alas, mainly to earlier times. However, certain practices persist, albeit in more or less abbreviated or distorted form; and to that extent a "present tense" reading of this account is warranted.

783 824 [782] of material preparatory to praying and that the sweat lodge was used for the purification of part or all of the group. Whatever route was taken, the end was the same: the cleansing of the heart and soul from the defilements of life. In one informant's words:

783 824 787

> Now I am told to illustrate the things we burn incense with, how these things came into existence. A person is out in the wilderness to get visions. He goes to the river and swims. He bathes himself and then he wipes himself with sage grass (Artemisia ludoviciana). His filthy body is not there and he walks away. He did not take any bedding. So he came to where he can build a shelter. There are a lot of creeping cedars (Juniperus horizontalis). He started to pull them out and make a shelter with them. The shelter is not the conical-shape shelter. They are called bridge shelters. He used the creeping cedar for a mattress. The creeping cedars smelled like his body. The holy spirit approached him. The human had a bad odor so the holy spirit fled from him. The first night he slept out; his body still has an odor. The next morning he started to cry. When he got drowsy from crying he slept again. He still has a bad odor. The next morning he will go to another place and he will sleep in another place. He will build another shelter with the same material. And he still has a bad odor. In the morning he starts crying again so that somebody might pity him, a strange person (supernatural being revealed as a man or animal). He built a shelter with the same material. On the fourth day he did not have any more body odor, and the holy spirit approached him. When the spirit noticed him, that he had no more body odor, then it gave him supernatural powers.

783 824 [782] And in another account:

> The leaves of the sage (Artemisia ludoviciana) are trimmed off, and they are moulded into balls, and the offering is cleansed with them. The sage is given to the ones that are going to sing, and they cleansed themselves with it. They cleansed the bad life that they had in the past, and now they are going to live a new one. Now, someone has a deceased relative and he is going to be purified by an older person. She will cleanse herself with the sage, and then they take them and they will throw them away. Now that dirt in the body is thrown away. That bad body. That's a cleansing of ourselves.

000 In the mythical tale of Scarface, the protagonist enjoyed the

773 In the mythical tale of Scarface, the protagonist enjoyed the
824 comradeship of Morning Star, who took him to his lodge in the supernatural
●[783] realm. Scarface met Sun and Moon, who were offended by his foul odor and decided to wash him in a smudge of cedar. After proving his worth by ridding the neighborhood of seven deadly cranes, Sun agreed to grant Scar-
343 face's wish that his ugly scar be removed. He built four sweat lodges of one hundred willows each; and, as the successive rituals were completed, his deformity gradually disappeared. Scarface finally emerged as a handsome young man, identical in feature to Morning Star. His scarred face was miraculously changed to that of a diety.

783 Incensing procedure varied slightly among ceremonialists, but the
[824] general formula was well defined. In the making of a smudge, hot coals were removed from the fire by means of a forked stick of choke cherry (Prunus virginiana) about 60 cm. long. The coals were laid in a small cleared place (the altar), and whatever was going to be used---sweet grass,
[788] alping fir---was prayerfully positioned on top of the coals. The rising smoke was cupped in the hands and was carried, with brushing motions, from the head to the shoulders and down to the feet. The songs sung during the cupping and brushing were created especially for this purpose. The procedure was repeated four times, to symbolize the cleansing of the entire body. Ceremonial artifacts, too, were incensed. (The prescribed uses of incense for specific ceremonies are given in the Annotated List of Plants.)

343 The sweat lodge offered another means of purification---one that was
783 rather an ordeal. Wands of willow (Salix spp.) were placed with both ends
824 in the ground, so as to form a dome. The floor of the sweat lodge was covered with sage (Artemisia ludoviciana), which served to cleanse the initiates during the sweat. Variations in the construction of the sweat lodge were dictated by the society or bundle to which the sweat lodge belonged; this will be discussed later.

000 belonged; this will be discussed later.

824 [783] One might ask why plants served as the means of purification. Why not an animal or its derivative? Why not simply some sort of gesture?

827 224 As the accounts quoted above clearly indicate, the sign of man's limitation was his scent. This was in keeping with a culture based on the hunt. Odor was of paramount importance: it was always the part of a man that traveled ahead of his presence, alerting the animals and determining in large part his success in supplying the necessities of life. (Hellson [171] has seen Cree bundles, created especially for the hunt, that contained the scent glands of particular animals and allowed the used to virtually walk right up to his prey.) Man's scent---so real in its immediate effects and at the same time so intangible, pervading the earth in all directions and moving without his control----was the perfect symbol of the relationship between the mortal and immortal realms. It followed that in order to transcend his finite nature and walk into the supernatural world, where he might gain help, he had first to lose his scent.

824 Now, it was recognized that plants were alive, just like animals. Seeds were planted in the Tobacco Planting ceremony; the generations were recognized; and sexual terms were applied to the parts of plants. Plants had odors, like men and animals. But they did not behave like animals. There were no accounts of plants talking to men. Plants did not have a social structure, as animals did. They did not react like animals. They were alive, and yet they exhibited a large number of inanimate traits.

If we combine the animate and inanimate traits, we find that plants were the ideal mediators between man and the supernatural realm. This was especially true of their ability to replace man's foul scent with their own and so symbolically release him from mortal bonds.

824 778 773 The mediating nature of plants can be seen in the important function of the Holy Turnip of the Natoas bundle. The turnip (symbolized by a plumed headdress) was the plant that was pulled from the ground by the woman who married Morning Star and went to live in the sky. It was through the hole left by the plant that she saw her people once again; then she became homesick and at length returned, bringing with her the Natoa bundle as a gift from the supernatural realm. The turnip had quite literally become a gate through which the connection between man and the supernatural was realized.

824 [783] It was no accident that all the plants used in the smudges and sweat lodges were aromatic herbs. Sweet grass, juniper, alpine fir, and sage yielded potent scents to those in need.

[821] Another practice illustrates this point. It is well known that the elements of the weather were personified by the Blackfoot. Such was the [782] case with the thunder. It was during heavy storms that needles of alpine fir (Abies lasiocarpa) were placed on a smudge with the expressed desire that Thunder would smell the symbolic offering, recognize his loyal subjects, and keep his lightning away from the camps.

[781] The figuring of plants in important parts of Blackfoot religion and mythology is evidence of strong belief in their effectiveness in helping anyone disposed to use them for attaining spirituality. Other plants had slightly different functions in the religious life of the Blackfoot---aspen and poplar (Populus spp.) for centerpoles, the "power root" (Angelica dawsonii) of the Horn Society, and tobacco---but the difference seems to have been one of degree rather than essence.

This overview is not meant to be more than suggestive of Blackfoot religious conceptions. The topic far exceeds the scope of this study. Our task is merely to document some of the uses of plants in Blackfoor religious activity. The remainder of this paper is devoted to those particulars.

ANNOTATED LIST OF PLANTS

924 The following list of plants and their functions reflects the Blackfoot emphasis (see Overview) rather than botanical taxonomy. We have found a ratio of social restriction corresponding to the amount of power attributed to the plants: the more powerful the plant, the more restricted was its use.

SWEET GRASS

Hierchloe odorata

Sweet grass (Fig. 1)* grows from creeping rhizomes throughout the low meadows of southern Alberta and Montana. The specific epithet odorata bespeaks its delicate scent, which graces any place the dried grass is kept. In Blackfoot the plant is siputs-sima ("fragrant smell").

The grass could be harvested by anyone. This was done in late summer. A handful of stems was bound at the lower end with other stems; then it was braided into double strands about 45 cm long (Fig. 2). We were not able to obtain an origin myth for this plant; indeed, there may not be one.

718 783 924 Virtually every holy artifact was incensed with sweet grass. The incensing usually was done at a smudge altar (Fig. 3) and with the help of a ceremonialist. Several small pieces were broken from the braid and placed on hot coals, which had been removed from the fire with a forked stick. Prayers accompanied every smudge. It was believed that a person would not lie if he used the incense. Medicine-pipe owners were required to burn the incense twice a day: in the morning and in the evening. [782] Almost every ceremony began with prayer and the burning of sweet grass. Sweet grass was essential to the raising of a fallen dancer or fallen

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 13]

*Figures follow the text.

778 783 824 paraphernalia. It was chewed in ceremonies involving prolonged fasting as a means of extended endurance. Sweet grass was used generally by everyone as incense with daily prayers.

846 824 783 An occasion for the use of sweet grass---one that was somewhat outside the bundle system but nevertheless of great importance---was the return of a woman with her newborn child. Traditionally, a woman would remain apart from her husband for about thirty-four days after giving birth. Just [881] before returning home she would be assisted by a woman so old she could have no more children. A complete set of new clothes was laid out for the mother. While this was being done the mother bathed in water scented with sweet grass. A smudge was prepared, and when the mother had finished bathing she covered herself with a robe and stood over the incense from the smudge. Then her new clothes were held to the smudge four times before she was [302] allowed to put them on. Her face, arms, and feet were ochred red. She was now considered to be completely cleansed (from the bad blood of the birth). The old woman who assisted her took her prepartum clothing and threw it in the river, where it floated away or sank out of sight. (Women who could not afford a new set of clothes kept their old ones and were purified in [842] them.) The mother then returned home as if she were newly married. (It was at this time that a woman would begin the practice of birth control; for this purpose a mixture of plants having abortifacient or contraceptive properties was contained in a religious bundle of special design.)

824 Braids of sweet grass were tied vertically around the base of the Horn Society staffs. Braids were also strung on the inside of headbands of the Motokiks headdresses.

[825] One informant told us that the Owl and the Loon in the medicine pipes owned the sweet grass and that the bear owned the juniper; but we have not

824 like a religious bundle. One informant, who owned a Weasel-tailed suit,
796 said that the black tip of the weasel's tail represented a creeping juniper
[237] berry that had become attached.
[292]

ALPINE FIR

824 Abies lasiocarpa (Hook) Nutt
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782 Katoy-yis, the Blackfoot "sweet pine"----that is, alpine fir (Fig. 19)----
was used as incense, primarily in association with the Medicine Pipe bundles.
[276] This was because pipes had been given by Thunder. Similarly, a smudge of
[773] alpine-fir needles was made, for safety's sake during severe thunderstorms.
[789] For the benefit of the reader and student we have included a list of medicine
[824] pipe bundles with which the use of this plant is required as incense:
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824

Long Time Pipe

Riding Pipe

Gros Ventre Pipe

Cree Pipe

Mandan Pipe

Opposite Direction Pipe

Arapahoe Pipe

Childrens Pipe

Short Pipe

Small Pipe

Red Covered Pipe

Shaggy Covered Pipe

White Mans Pipe

Sarsi Pipe

Numerous unnamed medicine pipe bundles

600 We have found fir needles in the initiation bundles of the Horn Society.

575 824 778 We have found fir needles in the initiation bundles of the Horn Society. We were told that the needles were mixed with the dry paint to make it smell better. Fir needles also were chewed and then sprayed over the Horn [783] ceremonial containers to purify them.

[783] Fir needles were used as incense during the transfer ceremonies of the Black Spring tipi design and the Bear Medicine Hat bundle.

PUFFBALLS

Lycoperdon spp.

824 The prairie puffball (a fungus) figured in Blackfoot religious life. The Blackfoot name for it is ka-ka-toos ("less powerful"), which implies that puffballs are stars fallen to earth during supernatural events.

[776] There is a story about the woman who married Morning Star and had a child by this supernatural being. When she returned to earth with the Natoas bundles and her child she was directed by the star-personage to keep her baby from touching the ground for fourteen days. She managed all right until the day she went for wood and left the child in the care of a grandmother. The grandmother was careless, and the baby touched the ground. It turned into a large puffball and returned to the heavens as the Fixed Star (North Star), plugging the hole left by the woman when she pulled out the Holy Turnip.

[782] [715] [372] [342] [532] Lycoperdon and other fungus, Polyporus, were used as incense to keep ghosts away. They were also included in the Firelighters bundle of the Horn Society for use as a kind of punk to light a fire easily. On certain painted lodges (for example the Otter lodge, shown in Fig. 20), the small circles at the base of the tipi represented the puffball (not lakes as is commonly thought), which insured fire to those within.

000 LUPINES

Lupinus spp.

578 Society
824 members were very careful to avoid being provoked while the root
575 was being used. Angry words spoken in such circumstances were likely to become a sad reality to the person rebuked.

824 The influence of the root was only temporary: it lasted just as long as the root was kept by the person using it. A man was open to the same bad influences that could affect him before, once he stopped using sau-gas-sim. Men on the reserve who still use the root are feared by those who believe in its power.

[126] Although we have had little difficulty in obtaining information about the root, we have been unable to gather a specimen in the field; our only [778] identification comes from herbarium material. (Possession depends on ceremonial transfer from a previous owner---an event which we were unable to arrange. Otherwise the power in the root might have bad effects, not only for the unanointed but also for all persons associated with him.)

Sau-gas-sim is certainly unique among the plants used by the Blackfoot for religious purposes. The power root placed the subject in a much more intimate relationship with the mysterious forces. Its proper application [754] had devastating results, and its misuse had serious consequences. Whether this is evidence of witchcraft among the Blackfoot is an open question; much more work needs to be done on this subject.

BALSAM ROOT

Balsamorhiza sagittata (pursh) Nutt.

Balsam root (Fig. 25) is a showy sunflower that brightens the foothills in late spring.

824 The root of ohm-ah-gahs ("big turnip") was used as incense during the
● 783 preparatory rites for the ceremonial runner who, in pre-horse days, had the
224 duty of hearding the buffalo toward the piskun (buffalo jump). The runner bathed himself in the smoke from a smudge of the dried root; according to

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 49]

824 tradition, that would enable him to run long distances---more than twenty
783 miles a day, we were told. The runner wore special moccasins, which were
224 [292] transferable annually.

824 Balsam root was used as incense during the Planting ceremonies of the
782 Tobacco Society (North Blackfoot). A horse was encouraged to stand near a
[776] smudge of ohm-ah-gahs. Then a rider leapt on the horse and galloped across the planting-grounds, stopping only to deposit small offerings to the Small People.

[778] The root of ohm-ah-gahs was used as incense for the Crow-feather headpiece
[292] during the transfer ceremony of the Beaver bundle. (Fig. 26).

128 This completes the Annotated List of Plants in Part I. The remainder of the paper consists of a List of Bundles and Religious Artifacts Associated with the use of Sweet Grass.

844 I had been in a hospital they might have operated and saved
845 it. There was no Indian doctor right there to help. They have
a lot of good herbs and medicines. Too bad modern doctors
759 don't learn them and use them. If they did it would be very
good."

846 By my grandmothers' ways, when a baby is born it is bundled up right away in old rags. The girl's mother would save old rags for her daughter beforehand. Of course, they were cleaned rags. The baby would be dressed like this for the first thirty days, and the mother, too. She would continue to wear the clothes she used during her pregnancy. She usually stayed with her own mother during this time, away from her husband. No sick person could stay around the home where she was taken care of. She didn't do any heavy work during those thirty days.

846 During this period of confinement the new mother was
783 bathed and given a cleansing ceremony every four days. Her mother would wash her and then cover her up with a blanket. She was made to sit by the altar, where incense was made. The incense went up under her blanket and purified her body. My grandmother, AnadaAki, still went through all this in her time.

846 To bring the mother's body back to shape, in addition to massages, she was made to wear a "belt" or girdle of rawhide. This was wide enough to cover her abdomen, and tied firmly. She did not use pins on any of the rag clothing. She tied her baby's rag bundle together with buckskin cords. This was kind of a trial period, to make sure everybody would survive
[165] the new birth. In those days children often died in their first days, and it was not unusual for mothers to die from childbirth, too.

At the end of the thirty days they would move camp, the mother would be cleansed once more, and they would get dressed in their new clothes. Usually the child got a new cradleboard.

After we finished our smoke, SikskiAki took the incense tongs—a forked serviceberry branch—from their place next to the altar. Between the burnt, pointed ends, she picked up a small glowing coal from the fire. Carefully, she carried the coal and placed it in the middle of the altar. From a little buckskin pouch she took a pinch of the sweet pine needles that are the sacred incense for our Bundle. Lifting them up high to symbolize the Holy Power of the Universe, she then slowly lowered the needles and let them fall onto the glowing coal. As the pine needles made contact with the coal, a spiral of smoke rose upward, its sweet fragrance filling our lodge with goodness and holiness.

Earlier, before Sun went down over the mountains, SikskiAki had brought in our ancient Medicine Pipe Bundle. The Bundle, which hung from a tripod, was covered with a fringed shawl. As the smoke rose up under the shawl and caressed the Bundle, we breathed deeply of the sweet smell and bathed ourselves, rubbing the smoke between the palms of our hands and then brushing our hands downward from the tops of our heads to the ends of our toes. Our Old People taught us this way of symbolically removing the evil from our minds and bodies with the Power of the Good represented by the sacred incense smoke. I prayed:

HiYo sacred smoke! HiYo Good Spirits of the Universe! Hear me! Let us take your Holy Power into our minds and into our bodies, so that your Holy Power will help us to be good. HiYo holy Pipe and all of you Good Spirits who are with our holy Pipe! Give us your strength and Power, as you have given it to the many good People in the past who had you with them while they followed their holy Ways. Inspire us to think of your Holy Power all of the time, you Good Spirits, so that we may learn to be holy, ourselves, so that we may be able to inspire others with your Holy Power and with these holy Ways. Be the center of our

1884—was a lone bull who was found in one of the prairie coulees.) 136

When the camp circle was filled with enough people to represent the Spirit of the tribe, the Okan women gave word to move the camp. After a short ride, the camp was set up again. Three times the camp was moved this way. On the fourth day, the final move was made to a site where the Medicine Lodge was to be built. In 1892 the seven holy women and their parties used four tipis for their preparatory ceremonies. One of these tipis belonged to the family of Big Wolf, whose wife was one of the vowing women. 796

The men who took part in the preparations for the Medicine Lodge ceremony were purified by sweat baths several times, beginning on the day before the final move to the Medicine Lodge site. The sweat houses were built by the members of four different men's societies. Each society built one sweat house whose frames were constructed of one hundred long, straight willows. The members of each society went out into the woods to collect the willows. When they returned, they rode together as a group, holding the branches in their hands and singing an ancient song, in imitation of a victorious war party returning home with trophies. All the People came out of their tipis to witness the event. 343 346 [783] [796] [824] [533]

The four sweat lodges were built a short distance outside the camp circle, near the holy women's tipis. Older men supervised the construction of the lodges. Half the willows were stuck into the ground on the south side of the lodge. These were painted with red earth, representing the Power of the warm summers. The rest of them were placed on the north side and were covered with black paint, representing the Power of the winters. Wider spaces were left on the east and west sides, for entering and leaving, breaking the otherwise complete willow circle. Opposing willows were bent toward the center and intertwined with each other, forming a basketlike frame. Over this frame, fur robes, [361] [822]

Each holy woman had a spiritual mother, a former holy woman, who gave her a sacred Bundle and the knowledge and rights to use it for the ceremony.[A] Their husbands were instructed by spiritual fathers, who were in turn the husbands of former holy women. While the husbands engaged in the sweat baths,, the holy women sat outside the lodge and prayed. The purifying sweat baths marked the beginning of the holy fast. During this fast, the holy women and their husbands concentrated completely on their efforts to inspire their People. The only thing they consumed was a shell full of water each morning and evening. Only the participants of the Medicine Lodge ceremony were allowed near their tipis, and they spoke not at all or in whispers.

The fourth and final move was made early in the morning. While the camp's lodges were being set up, the holy leaders marked out the site for the Medicine Lodge in the center of the camp circle, and dug the holes for the posts. While the women arranged their households, the children gathered firewood. The men went down to the river bottom, where they ceremoniously cut one upright post and one rafter log for the frame of the Medicine Lodge, then returned to the camp with the Spirit of a successful victory and again sang the ancient song. Some men fired their guns into the air. The excitement spread around the camp and strengthened the Spirits of everyone.

The construction of the Medicine Lodge began with the placement of twelve upright cottonwood logs. These posts stood in a circle about thirty-five feet in diameter; in the center was the large hole into which would go the Center Pole. The posts, long enough to extend about nine feet above the ground, forked at the top end. Eleven smaller logs, each about twelve feet long, were laid so that their ends rested in the forks of adjacent uprights, thus forming a circle. The remainder of the Holy Lodge was constructed the following day, the most important day of the ceremony.

A, [i.e., the Sun Dance--Analyst]

a prayer for success and good thoughts, the Bowl was fitted to the Stem. The Owner took hold of the Pipe—one hand on the Stem and one on the Bowl. It would have been a bad sign if the Stem became separated from the Bowl during the rest of the ceremony. 796 778 276 [782]

With the guidance of some old man, the Owner took his sacred Pipe outside. He was followed by his family, all wearing blankets or shawls, as a sign of modesty during holy occasions. The old man would call out, "Make way, People, here comes the bearer of a sacred Pipestem. Give him your respect." Quickly, the People would move aside, leaving a clear path for the bearer to walk, straight to the holy people's shelter. [292]

As Wilson stated, the sacred Pipe would first be offered to one of the priests. A helper from the Crazy Dogs Society would hold a glowing stick into the Bowl while the priest puffed on the mouthpiece. The Owner, holding Stem and Bowl in his hands, would offer the Pipe among the people, who placed their lips against the mouthpiece to smoke it. They would not hold the Pipe, not being purified with the sacred incense, and not trained in handling it. Some people would brush their hands reverently over the sacred Stem and then down their bodies, taking its ancient Holy Spirit within themselves. For many, this was the only chance to be in the presence of one of the tribe's sacred Pipes and to give their prayers directly to the Holy Spirits within it. [793] [783]

Wilson noted on his watch that not quite two hours had passed since the Horns Society left camp to go after the Center Pole: 796

Offerings were still being brought when, at 4:30, appeared in sight those with the centre pole. They came in a great procession, scores of

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 31A]

[Medicine Pipe Transfer Ceremony, 1890's]

female] in the lodge was praying in the same manner, some to the sun, some to the moon, birds, stars, eniskims [Iniskims, or sacred stones] and all their numerous deities, each person concluding his prayer by placing the morsel, which he had been holding up, upon the ground and rubbing it through the grass into the earth saying: "Earth persons, I give this to you." After they had done all this, the host held up some of his food and prayed as follows: 778 432 796 782

"Oh Sun! Oh Sun, pity me, Oh Sun, pity me, pity me that my children may grow up to be men and women. Pity me, that I may be a good man with a good heart, that my horses may increase and not get stolen. Pity me, that I may not die when sick, that I may escape all danger when I travel from home. I am happy to be able to see my family around me. I am glad to be able to look at my horses, I am glad that I can move around this summer in health, I am glad that things are as they are and hope that I am to be so blessed a long time."

[At this point the food was eaten, although Wilson does not mention this.]

Priest now takes tallow and red paint and paints his hands and face, holds his hands over incense and passes them over his legs, breast, arms and head [actually, in reverse order, symbolically cleansing the evil downward from his body], praying as he does so. Host does same, but does not paint himself. They now sing a number of songs, making gestures as they sing. . . . Priest now paints the South half of the square hole in the ground Red, and the North half, Black. Priest and host and wife now proceed to unroll the pipe by untying the numerous strings; each string as it becomes disengaged is waved towards incense and then put away. From bundle is taken four plumes, two are painted Red and two Black. Host now takes a pointed red stick and makes three feints to stick it into the ground at S.E. corner of hole and at the fourth does so, making a little hole in which a Red plume is placed. Same is 796 778 432 [302] [782] [783] [533] [237]

[Backside-To-The-Fire Pipe Opening Ceremony, 1972]

times, facing each of the four directions. The dancing party stands on a walkway made up of blankets, quilts, and pieces of material given to the Bundle's Owner afterwards. However, for this Bundle, both men and women dance, one encouraging the other. 796 778 535 562

Before the dancing began, Emonissi took the sacred Pipe outside the main tipi and prayed to the Powers of the Universe. He returned and laid the sacred Stem on a rack, made up of three sticks like a miniature goal post. The drummers began the introductory turn for the Medicine Pipe Dance. All the songs, or chants, were accompanied by hard-soft, hard-soft beats on the rawhide-covered hand drums. The four drums used to be among the accessories of a Bundle, but no longer. Today, drums are usually borrowed. 796 778 [782] [533] [534]

During the introductory song, Mokakin got up and prepared to be the first dancer. He went up front and took a pinch of sweet pine needles from the pouch next to the altar. Putting the needles in his mouth, he chewed them, then spit a bit of them in his right hand, which he brushed down the left side of his body. He did the same with his left hand. Then he repeated the whole ceremony. Finally, he spit some of the incense in his hands, rubbed his palms together, then rubbed the soles of his moccasins a total of four times. He was now symbolically purified and ready to handle the sacred objects from within the Bundle. 796 778 783 [824] [261]

One of the two Pipestems was very simply decorated, while the other was more fully decorated with the eagle tailfeather fan. The simple pipe looked like the secondary Pipe and the latter looked like the main Pipe, except for one feature. The secondary Pipe is usually more recently made; but here this simple pipe was very ancient compared to the one with the eagle tailfeathers. And indeed, Mokakin selected the much older, more simple Pipe, which was this Bundle's main Pipe. 796 778 276 [531] [237]

Mokakin prayed aloud, holding up the sacred 796 778 782

[P.134-B]

ing the Crees. Those who escaped sought shelter in the nearby coulee and river bottom. They left everything behind in their camp except their women and children. 778 726

The invaders rounded up the Cree horses and looted the camp. One Spot's partner, Many Mules, saw the sacred Pipe wrapped up and hanging from a tripod. As he approached it, One Spot called out, "My friend, don't touch that sacred thing. Those Crees have a lot of Power that may kill you if you take their Medicine." Startled, Many Mules left the Pipe and went on to look for other trophies. Then One Spot went over to it, said a prayer and took the sacred Pipe for himself, calling out, "I am One Spot of the Bloods." 778 727 [829] [782]

The war party had captured many horses, clothing, and other goods. A large victory dance was held when the party returned. They had not lost a single member. One Spot cradled the sacred Pipe in his arms while others danced with their captured goods. But he left the Pipe on a tripod outside of his tipi; he did not want to risk the safety of his family by bringing the Cree Medicine inside.

A few days later, One Spot asked several holy men, old Medicine Pipe Owners and Beaver Men, what he should do with his new sacred Pipe. They advised him to go through a purifying ceremony to remove any bad Spirit the Crees might have cast upon it from a distance. A bunch of sage was gathered and mixed with buffalo meat, a traditional sacrament believed to have the Power to remove bad Spirits from anything. The sacrament was rubbed all over the Pipestem and One Spot's body while all the Old Men prayed. After that, One Spot kept the Pipe inside his tipi. 778 783 [789] [824] [237]

In order to take this sacred Pipe into our Medicine Pipe Ways, it was necessary to have it transferred to an Owner. Because One Spot had fulfilled his purpose by capturing the Pipe and bringing the party safely back home, he decided to give it to Many Mules. The basic materials for a Medicine Pipe Bundle were collected, and Old 778 425

and bake them. She baked them. He pushed some hot thorns into my injured leg. I thought my leg was going to break! He put a long stick into the fire, and while it was burning he painted the thorns with sacred yellow paint and sacred black paint. Then he took the glowing red stick and heated the thorns, which burned right down to my skin. My leg felt like it was being held by something Powerful. I couldn't move it at all. The next day I was able to move my leg, but my father said, "Today we will have the treatment one more time." After the second treatment, the swelling went down and I was able to walk. I guess that was a form of what they call today acupuncture. 755 752

Oki, now let me tell you about some of the different things that grow. For instance, the "man-sage" [prairie sage] is used by men, the "woman-sage" [pasture sage] by women. 824

If a man has any kind of bad luck, he will use the prairie sage to cleanse the evil from his body. If a relative dies, a man will make incense with the prairie sage and rub it over himself to cleanse his body. They are pure growths from nature, so they can clean away unpure things. If a man is going to have a sweat lodge, he will sit on the man-sage and he will chew some. This will purify him. 824 783

Oki, there are all kinds of uses for this man-sage. When they went on war raids they would carry some leaves to chew on, so they wouldn't get out of breath. They chewed it for the same reason when swimming. If a man has smelly feet he will put some leaves in his moccasins to make the smell go away. He will boil some and wash his hair in it. If his nose is bleeding, he will chew it and put it in his nose to stop the blood. If he has body odor, he will put some under his arms and between his legs and the smell will go away. If he has the itch, he will boil some and put it on whatever place is itching. A man will put in a few leaves of man-sage in any kind of curing brew to purify it. In the Old Days, men put bunches of 824 [827] [515] [757] [515] [757] [783]

man-sage in the nose and mouth of their kill to purify. That makes the meat taste good. Any offering we make to Sun includes man-sage. 824 [783]

Oki, a woman uses woman-sage in the same way. A handsome woman will bathe with it and use it in her hair. For an easy birth, she will chew on it. She will use it for perfume and to keep herself from sickness. [782] [515] [844] [302]

Oki, my father always prayed while picking medicine plants. He kept all his curing medicines tied up in little buckskin pouches. There was no writing on them; he used different-colored beads to tell apart the few bags he didn't know by the way they looked and smelled. Sometimes he would show them to me and say, "I will use this for coughing, and this for hemorrhaging, and this for swelling." He put sage in with them to keep them pure. My father taught me a lot of his medicines, but I have lost most of them. Nobody was interested, so I have lost [forgotten] many of them. [751] 278 [415] [211]

The following list will tell you about some of the plants used as natural medicines by our People. The given uses were commonly known in the past, and are still relied on, at times, today. Many more uses were known only by certain persons in the Old Days. 278 824 [178]

ALUMROOT (*Heuchera americana*): A plant with blue flowers and many roots, it's called "dry root" by our Old People. It used to have a number of medicinal uses. [137]

The roots could be boiled and drunk hot for stomachaches, cramps, diarrhea, and sore throats. Cooled, the brew served as a wash for sore eyes. The leaves themselves could be chewed and applied to sores and swollen places. 757

Even horses benefited from its curing powers. A horse with a cough would be thrown down and tied, and the root-brew poured into a tube stuck into its mouth. To treat their saddle sores, the plant leaves would be mixed with fat and boiled in water. 232

side of Elk River was Crow country. We went up onto a near hill that was well grown over with juniper and other brush, and there awaited the coming of day. It came, and to the south of us, where Elk River comes from the mountains out into the plain, we saw rising the smoke of many lodge fires, of a big Crow camp, of course. 726

Leaving me alone on watch on the hill, my companions went down into the timber bordering the river and built a war lodge of poles and brush, and, when it was completed and a small fire of dry bark burning in it, I went down into it, Wolf Plume taking my place on the hill. I called upon Black Elk to assist me, and together we burned some sweetgrass, purified ourselves in the smoke of it, and, with the prayers and songs belonging to it, went through the complete ceremony of my Thunder Medicine; praying each of us, as the pipe went the round of our circle, for success against the enemy, and safe return to our People. [This is the common procedure with a war pipe. A regular Medicine Pipe would not be smoked at such a time.] That done, we rested there for the remainder of the day, keeping good watch upon the country from the hilltop, but failing to see enemies anywhere about. There were plenty of buffalo between us and Elk River; more herds were on the other side of the river. The Crows, we thought, must be making their killings of meat very near their camp. [342] [372] [793] [783] [782] [276] [778]

Came night, and we went on down to Elk River, built a raft of driftwood, placed upon it our weapons, clothing and various belongings, sacrificed to the underwater people some small presents, praying to them that we might safely cross their element, and so took to the water, holding onto our raft while swimming. We easily made the other shore, some distance downstream, dressed, and went on, following up the valley of the river. Morning had not come when we heard, far ahead of us, the dogs of the camp answering the howling of the wolves about it. We did not want to go on and raid the camp; we wanted first [501] [782]

[Nighttime Ceremony, Ca. 1972]

saw in my dream. Here is a part of him to prove that we are sincere and that he will always remember you." That old woman took out her knife and cut off the end of my little finger from my left hand, you can see where it is missing, and she left the end of my finger out there on the prairie as an offering. That is when I was first told that I would have old age.

After the Old Man's story, we sat quietly for a while. Then Atsitsina remarked that he had not yet been purified for the recent death in his family. He could not attend a holy ceremony until he symbolically cast the Spirit of death away from himself. He asked me to step outside with him and to bring along a few leaves of sage from the bunches by the altar. He had already taught me what to do to purify someone in our Old Way. I rolled the sage leaves into a small ball between my palms and prayed, asking for help that Atsitsina may forget what has happened and go on with the Good Spirits again. Four times I prayed and asked the various Powers to give him strength and encouragement, and then I handed him the ball of sage. He prayed and brushed his body four times with it, then told the sage to take the evil from his body as he cast it away toward the east, the direction of the new day.

A truck arrived bringing SikskiAki's parents and our two boys. Wolf Child quietly walked into the room and sat by me. The Old Man squinted to see who it was, then greeted Wolf Child: "Ahhh, Makwi Poka, shake hands!" The Old Man was very fond of Wolf Child. The boy prayed enthusiastically and made hand signs while trying to sing along with our holy songs.

NinnaOnesta and his wife arrived with a box full of bowls, utensils, pipe and blankets, and two cushions—in case our seating proved uncomfortable. The Old Man gave NinnaOnesta a seat on the far left, where he usually sits to call out his raiding exploits.

[Nighttime Ceremony, Ca. 1972]

to remind us of the Powers of Earth and all that grows upon it. When the ball was ready, he turned toward me and dropped it into my cupped hands. I rolled the ball between my palms and then brushed it, slowly, twice down each side of my body, while praying to ask that the cleansing Spirits of the sage purify my body and replace any evil in it with the natural goodness of the Earth. When I finished, I passed the sage sacrament to the person at my left, and so it went around the room. More incense was made, and then the young helper was instructed to go out and bring in the offering. He covered himself with his blanket for this sacred duty, and went out to bring in the holy object from its quiet, sacred resting place.

The object represents the Spirits who are with us, in our life here on Earth. Fastened to it are symbols that recall to everyone the Powers of the Universe. For instance, the frame of the offering is made of two willow sticks tied together in the shape of a cross; the willows represent trees and bushes, as well as the material from which we build our sweat lodges; and the cross the sticks are tied in stands for the junction of the four sacred directions, which is the place where we stand, each of us, no matter where on this Earth we are. Fastened on top of the cross, the willow stick tied to form a circle speaks for the roundness of our Sun, our Moon, and our Universe, the sacred circle in whose honor we arrange our lodges and our camps. Fastened to the circle are seven black-and-white eagle feathers. Seven is our sacred number, as there are seven moons in each season, and seven stars help us tell time at night and remind us of all the other stars in the nighttime sky; the feathers are black-and-white to remind us of day and night, good and bad, life and death. Bunches of sage are tied to the ends of the arms on the cross because sage is pure and holy in the prairie-life of our Old Ways, and represents the sacredness of all the plants on Earth. Black and red pieces of cloth are tied to the arms of the offering with buckskin thongs; the thongs remind

[Nighttime Ceremony, Ca. 1972]

of a willow stick. He then blew offerings of smoke to the Spirits who dwell in the Above, in the Below, and on Earth. Everyone was very quiet, for the Old Man was symbolically smoking with the Powers of the Universe. He blew smoke in various directions until all the tobacco in the bowl had been smoked. 796 788 276

The main part of the ceremony was now ready to be started. Incense was made, and the Old Man held four rattles over the sweet smoke. He shook the rattles, to prepare the Spirits for singing, then passed them to the man who was farthest to the right. The others sang a song while he prayed and told about one offering. In the same way, each of the four men sang four rounds of the song and called out four offerings. 796 788 533 [534]

The four men prayed for the other participants, calling each one by name, and their families. As each one heard his name, he placed his hands on his chest, signifying that he was taking the prayers to his heart. [782] [201]

When each man finished praying, he sang his first four songs, representing the most Powerful Medicines transferred to him during his lifetime. Atsitsina and I were the only participants who had not belonged to the Horns; our first songs were for our Medicine Pipe Bundles. Medicine Pipe Owners were allowed to sing four songs for the Bundle they were keeping. Beaver Bundle Owners could sing as many songs as they wished for their Bundle. All others were allowed to sing only one song for each sacred thing that had been transferred to them, even if that object had a great many songs. 796 793 778 533

As a current Medicine Pipe Owner, a special ceremony was held at my turn to sing for the first round. A blanket was spread to the left of the altar. The Old Man sat to my left on the blanket. A coal was deposited at the rear of the altar and I held a pinch of sweet pine needles over the hot coal, the Old Man's hand on top of mine. He began with a prayer, then sang four Medicine Pipe songs, slowly lowering my hand with the in- 796 793 783 533

[Nighttime Ceremony, Ca. 1972]

142
291
796
533
114

Singing the Medicine Pipe Songs: Makwi Api and me.

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cense during the beginning of the first one. We took the sacred smoke and symbolically purified ourselves with it, while we sang of the holy Bundle that had given its Spirit to both of our lives. 796 793 783 533

After everyone had sung his first four songs, we took another break. The first of four rounds was over.

The second round of songs began with the rattles over the incense like the first round. Most sang songs during this round for Medicine Pipe Bundles. One song was sung for the Bundle itself, another for the necklace or some such sacred article. After each man had sung his four songs, he told which sacred article they were for, who gave him that article, and whom it was finally given to. Some singers ended their round by saying that their holy object had been given to the white man by so-and-so, and it was now on display at such-and-such a place. 796 793 778 533

Those who have sold our major Bundles, and 000

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

796 782 252 The men sit on the north side and the women on the south. At the proper moment, the mother brings in the tongues, passing around to the south side, and lays them in rows on a half rawhide back of the fire. All the women having made vows are now called upon to slice the tongues. Their husbands must be present.

796 252 The tongues are slit open and the women are invited to slice and boil them. When all the guests are present, one of the tongues is taken and painted black on one edge and red on the other, and given to the woman who made the vow. The rest of the tongues are handed to the women for skinning and slicing; if there were more tongues than women, each was given more than one to slice. After all the women have the tongues, [783] the woman with the painted tongue makes a confession, saying, "Sun, I have been true to my husband ever since I have been with him and all my life. Help me, for what I say is true. I will skin this tongue without cutting a hole in it or cutting my fingers."

[783] The next woman also makes a confession, and so on. After all have confessed, they commence to skin the tongues. As the first woman takes up the knife, the song runs: "A sharp thing I have taken; it is powerful." The knife is painted, one half red, the other black. Should any of the women cut a hole in the tongue skin or cut their fingers, it is a sign that they must have lied and they are ordered from the tipi. At the outset, each woman carefully examines her tongue to see if the skin is perfect. Should a hole be found, the tongue is passed to the director who marks it with black paint. After the tongues are all skinned and sliced, they are passed back to the woman who distributed them and placed in a wooden bowl. The skins of the tongues are tied in bunches with sinew so that they can tell to which woman the skins belong.

The skins are to be boiled by two women. Two sticks are given to one woman and one to the other. All this time singing is going on. The woman who has the two sticks paints them black, while the woman who has the other, paints it red. The three sticks are tied together at one end and are used as a tripod for hanging the kettle in which the skins of the tongues [531] are to be boiled. The legs of the tripod, the wooden kettle hook, and all other sticks are painted half in red and half in black. Also, the kettle is marked with four vertical bands of black and four of red. The four blunt sticks for stirring the pot are painted in pairs, red and black. A red and black painted stick is slipped through the bail, passed around to the north of the tipi, and handed to the two women. During all these movements 796 there is praying and singing. The women each take hold of one end of the stick and go for water.

[782] They make four pauses on this journey, each time praying to the sun and

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

796 [782] pray for themselves and their relatives after which they distribute dried tongue among them. Finally, there is a general distribution of tongues among the people.

796 837 783 However, there is another aspect of their appearance at this point. The Blackfoot assume that many women have at one or more periods of their lives been invited by a man to commit the offence and that often the occasion is one of great temptation or calls for great presence of mind and will power. Now, when addressing the sun, if so approached, the woman narrates the circumstances, naming the men committing the offence, and recounts the manner of her refusal. In naming the offender, they usually say, "I suppose he hears what I say." These women are also subject to challenge of their having committed adultery. It will be seen from this that the part they take in the ceremony is an ordeal for which most women have little liking and one which they will not undertake lightly. The Blackfoot, themselves, regard it as one of the most solemn occasions in the ceremony. So far as we could learn, no one now living was ever present when one of these women was challenged, but the naming of men who were guilty of improper advances was not unusual.

796 793 A retrospect of the concept of the tongues indicates that the entire ceremony, or their association with the medicine woman and those who are sexually pure, gives them a potency that may be acquired by eating. They seem most closely associated with sexual purity since they are less primary in the function of the medicine woman than in case of those who "go forward," the former being required to possess many virtues, the latter [785] but one. While the medicine woman fasts and keeps to her tipi, the others do not.

The Medicine Woman.

We shall now give our attention to the medicine woman. As previously stated, she is in most respects the central figure in the whole ceremony, around whom centers its more serious and solemn aspects. On the fifth day, an elaborate ritual is demonstrated in her tipi, culminating in the [778] procession to the dancing lodge. To this ritual belongs a medicine bundle with accessories, known as the natoas, though the name is primarily that [432] of the headdress which the bundle contains. This bundle is transferred in the ritualistic way to the medicine woman by the ceremony and thus becomes hers to care for and guard until used again at another sun dance ceremony. The ritual and the bundle have been discussed in detail in Volume 7 of this [292] series. In addition to the contents of the bundle, there must be a special [301] robe of elkskin, a dress of the same material, and wristlets of strong elk teeth.

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

796 793 839 783 Being a good and true woman, like all others who give the sun dance, she spurned him. Next day she told her husband the whole story. He was very angry. He was not satisfied with the confession she made, but suspected that she must have given the young man some encouragement. So when all the medicinemen and women had come into the tipi to rehearse the songs as usual, he made a statement of these suspicions and as he had two wives, he proposed to have them change places.

(756) The medicinemen pleaded for the first wife because they believed her innocent, but the husband was obdurate. So the second wife was called in to take the place. Then the first wife said, "It was I who saved this man's life when he was ill. I made the vow to give the sun dance and he got well. I have suffered much in fasting, all for him. Now he disgraces me before all the people. But I will put my virtue to a test. If I am true, I have already acquired power."

(782) (821) (789) She filled a pipe, went outside and standing now on the east side of the tipi, then on the south, the west, and the north, she addressed the sun. The day was clear, but soon after the woman entered the tipi, thunder was heard. A storm came down with hail and blew over many tipis. But in spite of these proofs, her husband was obdurate and the second wife went on with the ceremony.

796 755 593 Not long after the sun dance this same man became ill again. Finally, as a last resort, he called upon the first wife to save him again. This woman told him to call upon the other woman as he seemed to have so much faith in her. So he died and was properly punished for so unjustly treating his faithful wife.

The Procession to the Dancing Lodge.

796 798 793 788 In our account of the natoas ritual we told how the father, son, etc., emerge from their tipi. The file is headed by the father, followed by the son, next the mother, then the medicine woman followed by women bearing the tongues. The father and the son are muffled in blankets (robes); the latter walks with bowed head, leaning heavily on a staff and bearing over his head a wild rhubarb stalk.[1] The medicine woman wears the natoas on her head, an elkskin (often buckskin) dress and an elkskin robe, with the digging-stick on her back. For a staff, she uses one of the smudge sticks. The women in her rear bear parfleches containing the tongues, together with blankets and other ordinary objects. Two or three old men act as

(534) (824) (262)

[1] Scar-face is said to have made a whistle (flageolet) of such a stalk. The pith of the growing plant is sometimes eaten for food.

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

conductors, or flankers, keeping the way clear of spectators, etc. The procession moves slowly and by stages. The four principal personages in it keep their eyes upon the ground. The course is southward past the entrance (east side) to the dancing lodge, around the south side, the rear of the shelter and entering from the north side. Here the medicine woman remains until the dancing lodge is raised at sunset, when she returns to her tipi and breaks her fast with berry soup. The father and the son go to a sweathouse after which their responsibilities also end. During the continuance of the ceremonies in the sun lodge, the medicine woman cares for the natoas bundle, now her property, until transferred to another, but is otherwise free to do as she likes. She usually remains quietly at home receiving guests and resting.

The part of the medicine woman is truly a sacrifice. She and her husband must pay liberally everyone called upon for ceremonial service directly connected with the tongues and the natoas ritual. They must also pay a considerable amount of property for the natoas itself. To give the ceremony means the sacrifice of all personal property. On the other hand, there is compensation, aside from fulfilling the vow. Her relatives are very proud of her since she is so virtuous. She is highly respected by her husband and family. In a measure those who "take the tongues" are also respected. The medicine woman may act as the mother in a future sun dance for which she will receive presents and she may eventually realize something by transferring the natoas to another. Should anything go wrong during the ceremony, the weather be unfavorable, etc., people will look with suspicion upon her and say she must have lied in her confession to the sun. Should she become ill or have deaths in the family, the same charge will be made.

The Offerings of Cloth. After the procession headed by the father and he is in position at the west side of the dancing lodge, offerings of cloth and clothing are brought up by the people. A man making such an offering hands the father a filled pipe and the cloth. The father holds the pipe and offers prayers for the giver and lights and passes the pipe to other old men sitting around. The cloth he lays in a pile. Then he paints the giver: first the face is smeared over with red, then black spots are daubed on the cheeks, nose, forehead, and chin, four in all. A black circle is marked around each wrist. Women bringing offerings and pipes go to the mother who prays for them and paints their faces red with a black spot on the nose and a black circle around the face. There is also a black circle around each wrist.

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

796 346 773 539 Her husband could tell by her eyes that she had been crying and he said, "I told you not to dig up that turnip, but nevertheless you have done so. Since you are lonesome and wish to return to your people, I will take you back." Then Morningstar went out and killed some buffalo. After he had skinned all of them he cut the hides into long strands, fastened them together, and tied the woman and her child to one end and let her down from the sky to where her people were.

Before she reached the earth, a little sore-eyed boy was lying on his back, looking up at the sky and saw a very small object coming down. The boy told the men who were playing the wheel gambling game what he saw, but they laughed at him and threw dirt in his eyes and said, "You must see the gum on your eyelids or lashes." As the falling object came closer others noticed it and when it came among the group they knew that it was the woman who was missing from the camp. They untied the rawhide strand and noticed that some of the buffalo tails were on the ends of the long rope which lay piled up high before them.

This woman came down with her digging-stick. As she was not a wicked woman and only lived with Morningstar as her husband, she gave her digging-stick to the medicine lodge woman and the natoas was named for the turnip she dug up. When the sun dance was held, this woman told them always to cut up a rawhide into strands and tie the posts with them. Also that the center post and the birch on it must be tied with them. The tail of the hide is to hang down from the center post. These rawhide strands are a representation of the rawhide rope with which this woman was let down to the earth. Later, the moose hoofs are tied to this digging-stick. The plumes on the natoas are to represent the leaf of the large turnip this woman dug up while in the sky.

Raising the Sun Pole.

796 782 [783] While the hide is being cut, all the woman who made vows to take some of the tongues come forward to the parfleche placed near the medicinemen and women. Each woman takes one of the tongues and stands with the person for whom her vow was made and makes a confession to the sun in a loud voice, so all may hear. Then she prays to the sun for the beneficiary. After all the women have taken their tongues, some of the men tie the cloth offerings to the ends of the poles and a bunch of birch is tied between the forks of the center pole.

796 346 The preceding ceremony comes to a close as the sun gets very low. About time for the sun to set, a procession of pole raisers starts from each of the four quarters of the camp circle. Tipi poles are tied near the small ends in pairs, each pair carried by two men. The four parties advance in unison by four stages and at each pause sing a special song. In the last move, they rush upon the sun pole and raise it in place. In the meantime, the father and son go and stand on the center pole while their wives stand to the west. The men make wing movements with their arms toward the east. According to some informants, the medicine woman may make hooking motions at the pole, to symbolize the mythical Elk-woman.

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

787 And said Little Bird Woman: "Oh, brother, after your fast, join
785 Seizers; they are the best clothed, best singers and dancers of all of
575 the warrior bands."

"No, you will join the Raven Carriers, they such always-successful warriors. My father, my brother were members of it," the mother said.

785 There followed some argument between mother and son over
787 which of the medicine men (Sun priests) should be asked to pray
[778] for his safety and success in his lone and strenuous fast. The result was that Fox Eyes brought in his horses, roped and led one of them before the lodge of Black Otter, owner of the sacred Thunder Pipe bundle, gave him the horse and said: "*Haiyu!* Oh, powerful, Sun-favored Thunder Pipe man. I am to undergo my lone fast. Help me. Pray for me!"

346 "Yes. Build a sweat lodge at once and I will join you in it," the old man answered.

Badger Woman, her daughter, and some of their women friends were already building the sweat lodge. In shape it was a semisphere, about ten feet in diameter; its frame, of willows; its covering, an old lodge-skin. In its center a small pit was dug; and lastly, in the near-by fire, some stones were set to heat.

● 783 Came presently Black Otter with his sacred pipe, a wooden bowl,
793 and a buffalo tail; and he and Fox Eyes went into the little lodge,
[778] undressed, thrust out their clothing, and naked sat. The women passed in the red-hot rocks, and with a stick Fox Eyes rolled them into the pit; lastly, the old man's bowl, filled with water, was passed
533 to him. He dipped the buffalo tail in it, sprinkled the rocks, and, as
782 dense steam began to fill the lodge, he sang the first one of his Thunder Pipe songs and then fervently prayed Sun to protect Fox Eyes, to give him success in the lone fast which he was about to endure.
[821] Followed more sprinklings of rocks; more songs; more prayers to Sun, Night Light (the moon), the Seven Persons (constellation of
778 Ursa Major), and Thunderbird. Lastly, with the sacred pipe in hand,
776 Fox Eyes prayed the Above Ones for success in his undertaking, for
782 long life and happiness for his family, and for all of the people of his tribe.

24: Schultz, F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

tribe. We were a crowd of men and women sitting close around the little sweat lodge, listening to it all; the prayers and songs, solemn, fervently impressive, heart stirring, they brought tears to all eyes. Finally the old man and Fox Eyes reached out for their blankets, and, wrapped in them, came out and with heads bowed walked slowly to the river to bathe and dress.

On the following morning, accompanied by his mother, sister, and a half-dozen men relatives for protection, Fox Eyes rode off for his fasting place, and I joined a party of hunters. We were back long before sundown with the choice parts of some buffalo cows we had killed, just in time to see old Black Otter riding the round of the camp, stopping occasionally to sing a sacred song, pray, and call upon the people to pray for the safety and success of Fox Eyes in his lone and strenuous fast.

Three mornings later Badger Woman, Little Bird Woman, and I rode out to visit the faster. At the mouth of Crooked Creek we turned up the valley of the Missouri and then up to the foot of a cliff, where we left our horses, climbed for a time, and turned off upon a narrow shelf of the cliff; presently we came to Fox Eyes in a cavelike depression formed by the overhanging rock. Wrapped in his blanket, he was lying upon a buffalo robe, and at his side were his gun and a red-painted, empty, water bowl. "*Ha!* Here you are: mother, sister, and my good friend *Apikuni*, too," he said.

"Of course," I answered. "I shall come often to see you if I may." We sat down beside him, and his mother emptied a bladder skin of water that she had brought into the wooden bowl; carefully he raised it, took a few slight sips of the water, said that he would like to drink it all.

"You haven't yet had a vision?" his mother asked.

"Last night, the beginning of one," he answered. "I was walking in a valley, in a grassy length of it. A big longtail (cougar) came out from the timber, and I said to it: 'Oh, you powerful, always-successful killer of your food. I am poor. Pity me. Help me; give me of your power; help me to live a long and successful life.' He looked at me, turning his head this way and that way. At last he answered: 'You

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

the eagle might pluck out the seizer's eyes with its sharp bill or tear his flesh with its poisonous claws.

It was late when we finished our work on the butte and returned to camp. In the evening we sat for a time in Black Otter's lodge, and he sang some sacred songs and prayed Sun to give Fox Eyes success in eagle-catching. On the following morning Badger Woman gave us an early feed of broiled meat and tea, and then Fox Eyes burned some sweetgrass close before his couch, bending over the smoke and grasping handfulls of it with which he rubbed himself. Sweetgrass was a sacred plant; its delicious perfume was greatly prized by Sun; the smoke of it removed all human odor.

Having purified himself, Fox Eyes, as was required of him, said to his mother and sister: "I am going this morning to attempt to catch an eagle, and you women must do all that you can to aid me. Until I return you must remain in the lodge, continuously praying for my success. Also, lest in seizing an eagle he should pierce me with his claws, you must not put any thorny wood on the fire, nor eat thorny berries, and for the same reason you must not use a needle, or awl, or scratch yourself."

With that we saddled the horses that we had picketed the evening before, on our way taking up a human skull which we had found at the edge of a grove and which Fox Eyes was to place in the pit. There was nothing that the Blackfeet dreaded so much as a human skull, but for this very reason it was considered necessary for an eagle catcher to have one in his pit. It was a test of his courage to sit with it during his long times of waiting and watching for an eagle to appear, and there was no possibility of going to sleep and losing his chance to seize one, with such a fearsome object at his side.

When Fox Eyes had settled down in the pit and was comfortable, I carefully replaced the sticks and grass that he had pulled aside in order to enter. Then, saying that I hoped he would have quick success, I mounted my horse and, leading his horse, rode to the top of a butte a half-mile away and sat down in the shade of a pine tree to await the result of our work. The sun was then well up in the blue, and I searched in all directions, but not an eagle was in sight. Not even

53: Uhlenbeck L-5 (1910-1911) 1912 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

539 726 kemoàuaiks: Annáitsinomòkit, kepúyi atsikí ánnaie anístsaitsinomòkit. Itomátapaχtùiχ'piaists. 539 726 Támoχkotau ómâχtakauatsìpamaχp. 714 Moksí asipí osóksisi ánni ákitsapiχ'tsiuaie. Moksís osoyátsimâii ákitotaχkànniuaie. A'isapaxnìstsioiaists otótsimànists. Otsksínoauaiks nató'siks nápiks itáiχ'tsiskoyìau. Aχkúiinnimàni sotámotakìau. Omí nápii ákitanistsiauaie: Kikáiχ'tsi. Otákanikoaiauaie: Nitákitapò, nitákiχ'tsiuatâ`χp. A'kstaxmitsipìminai, akimóχts 539 ákitopìnai. A'kitsipstsàpiχ'tomoyìuaie: 726 A'moi kitótsisisin. 783 Ánni kitaχkúiinnimàn. A'mo kótàs. Iikákimàt, noχksóksksinòkit. Otákatsimmoiχ'kaχkoχtomòkaie, máχkoχkòtàs, máχkaχsapauauaχkàni. Ki omá tákitsìkoχpitoχkotùspa. Moyísts kitákitotaki aiísksipistàiks. Kítoχkot kiχ'tsípimi. Otáiksistsoksksinokàie. Okímmànists ótoχpàtsokaie. Itápaiaiakomopistàiau. Otópimi, ótstsipìsimàtsis, matsikísts, osákonimàni, ánnistsiaie kanáitomanistomòpim. Itunnítsotsèiau. Túkskaie moyísi itsitsâ'χkipuyìau. Kotokyánokoyì átsòtsinìmiau. Itsástòkimaiau, itsítsiksìmaiau. A'kéks otsíniχ'kotomòkoainu. Sotámanetòiau. Itaχkyápautsimaiau.

Then they [some others] said: Yes. Then they began to have moccasins [made]. Then they would tell their sisters: Make me moccasins, sew ten pair of moccasins for me. Then they [the sisters] began to put the soles on them. Then he [the young man] was given things to patch up his moccasins. He would put an awl [and] a sinew in his awl-case. He would sew the awl to his bullet-sack. All the things that he would take were complete. They [the young men] built sweat-lodges for those that they knew to be old medicine-men. Then they would put tobacco in a pipe. They would say to that old man: You have a sweat-lodge [built for you]. Then they would be told by him: I shall go there, I shall sweat there. Then he would go in, at the upper end [of the sweat-lodge] he would sit. Then he [the young man] would hand him his smoke: Here is your smoke. That is your pipe. This is your horse [he says this giving him one]. Try hard, paint my face. He [the old man] would say prayers for him, that he might get a horse, that he might go about on his raids allright. [The old man would say:] And over there, a little way from the camp [of the enemy], you will get a horse. Among the lodges you will take [the horses] that are tied. I give you a striped one. Then he [the old man] had done putting paint

539 726

auaists, omá níuau ki manikâ´piks áistunnoyii mánistsistomaiks. Apatóχtak áuaniu, iχ´tsáuæskunatapsinu manikâ´piks, istotaitsípisau mánistsistomaiks.

for them [near their fathers' lodges]. When they had given birth to a child, they were safe after nine days. The reason why the women did not give birth to a child in their [own] lodges, [was that] the man and the young men were afraid of those that had just given birth to a child. The ancient people used to say, [that] the young men were not strong [would have no endurance], if they entered in a place [where there were] women that had just given birth to a child.

[Cf. Wissler slbi 28.]

Marriage.

Á´kai-Pekàniua matsoápanikâpiks, ákoχkèmisau, mátauaitakìuaiks. Omí nínai, otáiakûsimmòki, otánnyai ákàksinaiin. A´moia matsoápii otsináni ákoχkænoχkotsìu otánni. Ponokâ´mitaiks áχsika ákoχpoχkanauaχkiskuyiuaie. Kanáitapiua ákstæmsksinìm, áiaua áχkiskumoau. Ki áksksinoau, otsitsoápsi. Ki omí maáχsi ákatsksinoàin, otsínaiis. Ki omá manikâ´piu otákoχkspummok únni. Nitúyi ákanistaχsii ponokâ´mitaiks ki ámoia píapì otákomatskaχtaksists. Nitúyi kanáitapiua ákanistsinoyìu, omí manikâ´pi otomátskaχtaksists. Omá saχkínau omí otoχkéman uyínnaiks nitúyi ákatanistoχkotsiu. I´soχtsik omí otoχkéman mátsàpsis, mátakstuyi-

The fine young men of the ancient Peigans, when they were to marry, never asked for a wife. The daughter of the chief, that had to have him for son-in-law, would be dressed up. He would give all the finery, that belonged to him, to his daughter. He would send all good horses with her. Everybody would know, [that] a certain person had a wife sent to him. And he would be known, that he was a fine man. And his father-in-law would also be known, that he was a chief. And the young man would be helped by his father [to give presents to the chief who was to be his father-in-law]. The horses and the other things, that he [the future

ing of horses and the eradication, whenever possible, of one's enemies.

At one point, though, there was no dearth of Blackfoots who earnestly desired to become accepted for baptism into the Roman Catholic Church. In the summer of 1846, Chief Victor and his Flatheads, aided by a dozen lodges of Small Robes (the Small Robes were a rather independent band of Piegans who were friendly toward the Flatheads) achieved a smashing victory over a superior force of Absaroka (Crow) Indians. And when the Flatheads attributed their remarkable success to the power and protection of the "Black Robes' God", this was all the Blackfoots needed to hear. Baptism by the Black Robes was obviously a guarantee of victory over your enemies, and the more bloodthirsty the Blackfoot warrior, the more ardent became his petition for baptism. But since this attitude did not reflect the concept of Christian thought which the good priests of the Church had been attempting to convey, Father Point (the Blackfoots called him "Tusks"), who headquartered on the Missouri River at the American Fur Company's post of Ft. Lewis, recorded that of the 651 Blackfoot Indians he was able in all good conscience to accept for baptism, 625 were children, 22 were women, and only four were grown men.

The foregoing notwithstanding, Roman Catholicism was always more successful than Protestantism amongst the Blackfoots, and it is not difficult to suggest several reasons why this should have been so. Although the old-time Indians could in some measure reconcile the more abstractive philosophy of the Protestants with certain scientheistic elements of their own religious inheritance, the more tangible paraphernalia associated with Roman Catholic ritual was much more impressive to them, and much more easily identified with aspects of their existing beliefs. During a Blackfoot Sun Dance or Medicine Lodge, buffalo tongue is cut into small pieces and distributed among certain participants; this gesture is in all respects strikingly similar to the Christian sacrament of the Eucharist. Also during the Medicine Lodge ceremony, Indian women will step forth and openly confess their sins, and this, of course, suggests the confessional both of the Roman Catholic Church and of the high order of the Episcopal Church. (It is important to realize that these Medicine Lodge ceremonies were not derived from the Christian religion but had their existence before the coming of the White Man.)

From the point of view of the Blackfoot fighting man, two aspects of religious tradition possessed by the Roman Catholics were espe-

scene, the Chief's fourteen war parties constitute a rather remarkable achievement. By the time he made his raids, the Whites had begun to move into Montana and to establish military posts and to make treaties (none of which they honored) with the Indians, and so the Chief had a pretty rough time of it. He has a bullet hole in his left arm just behind the wrist, and although I have not been able to lead him into a detailed discussion of the matter, he did mention that the wound was quite an annoyance because the bullet broke the bone and he had trouble loading the muzzle-loading old rifle that he was using at the time.

With several notable exceptions--during one battle the Piegans killed more than 300 Gros Ventres and Crows--most war expeditions were made for the purpose of stealing horses and were composed of only a half-dozen or so warriors. Piegan war expeditions were not, as one authority has phrased it, "spur of the moment affairs." Usually they were planned at least several days in advance, and it was customary for the young warrior to first seek the blessing of an old man of the tribe. Sometimes the warrior built a sweat lodge in which the old man would purify him, and sometimes the two just smoked a pipe together. Almost always the older man would give the youngster a protective token or amulet to carry, and the sale of especially powerful medicine bundles or war bundles was quite a thriving business.

At length I asked the Chief to tell me frankly who the best fighters among the Plains Tribes had been, and very emphatically he replied "[pĭkā́ñi]" (the Piegans). And I guess that history bears out his opinion very well. In the early days, during the westward movement by way of the Oregon Trail, the pioneers took a southerly route around the Blackfoots (instead of following the natural course of the Missouri Valley, which would have been the logical route) simply because the Blackfoots were so powerful and so fierce that to invade their land was virtual suicide.

The Blackfoots never did engage in anything resembling full-scale warfare against the Whites, although one could not have blamed them if they had done so. Especially during the post-Civil War period, when false reports of gold in Blackfoot territory precipitated an invasion of the region by the toughs and whiskey peddlers and the brand of scurf invariably attracted to promises of quick money, the Blackfoots were very badly used by the Whites. But the only "battle" between Blackfoots and the U.S. Army occurred in January, 1870, when there took place an action which has